



# NEWS RELEASE



***National Forests in Alabama – Public Affairs***  
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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Forest Service Implements Prescribed Burn Program in Alabama's National Forests**

(Montgomery, Al) January 22, 2008 --- U.S. Forest Service fire personnel are gearing up to burn approximately 85,000 acres throughout the National Forests in Alabama during the next three months. If weather conditions permit, the Forest Service will conduct controlled burns as part of the land management plan to reduce forest fuels, help plant and animal habitats, and protect communities from the threat of wildfires. Residents and travelers near the Bankhead, Talladega, Conecuh, and Tuskegee national forests may notice an increase in Forest Service fire personnel who are monitoring and patrolling the burns. Periodically, there may be smoke in the area which may reduce visibility. The Forest Service is asking everyone to drive slow and use their low beam lights. Persons with smoke sensitivities should also take precautions.

“The Forest Service is committed to maintaining the health of national forests and keeping our communities safe from wildfires,” said Miera Crawford Nagy, forest supervisor for the National Forests in Alabama. Last year the agency treated 56,785 acres for hazardous fuels throughout the National Forests in Alabama. The land management plan directs the Forest Service to use prescribed fire as a tool to reduce fuel build-up on the ground floor that could lead to a wildfire if untreated.

According to Greg Born, fire management officer for the National Forests in Alabama, prescribed fire is a controlled, low-intensity fire that opens the forest floor by reducing some of the brush and mid-story trees that block sunlight from reaching the ground. “When we conduct prescribed burns, we are burning excess debris that could build up and lead to a wildfire,” said Born. “We also use prescribed fire as management tool to maintain a healthy balance of vegetation and wildlife habitat conditions.”

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Forest Service fire specialists take into account weather conditions and fire behavior before conducting a burn to mitigate significant smoke impacts into communities. If you have questions about a prescribed burn, contact a Forest Service district office or check the Forest Service website at [www.fs.fed.us/r8/alabama/planning/f\\_health.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/alabama/planning/f_health.shtml). The following prescribed burns are planned throughout the National Forests in Alabama: Bankhead Forest is planning to burn 14,000 acres in Winston and Lawrence counties call (205) 489-5111; Talladega Forest- Talladega and Shoal Creek Districts are planning to burn 27,000 acres in Calhoun, Clay, Cleburne and Talladega counties call the Heflin office at (256) 463-2272 or the Talladega office at (256) 362-2909, a map of the planned burn areas for the Talladega Division will be located at [www.fs.fed.us/r8/alabama/planning/f\\_health.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/alabama/planning/f_health.shtml); Conecuh Forest is planning to burn 20,000 acres in Escambia and Covington counties call (334) 222-2555; Talladega Forest - Oakmulgee District plan to burn 21,000 acres in Bibb, Dallas, Perry, Tuscaloosa, Hale, and Chilton counties call (205) 926-9765; and the Tuskegee Forest is planning to burn 3,000 acres in Macon county call (334) 727-2652.

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